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INJURY TO THE HAIR

Jersey Justice—Overlooking the Patient.—At the time of the conviction of the would-be assassin of Mayor Gaynor much press comment was indulged in on the celerity of so-called Jersey justice.

Naturally there had been a conflict, a conflict which to an open-minded man would seem to be the last in the world to be found. The defense maintained, and mainly through the evidence of Dr. Henry A. Cotton of Trenton State Hospital, that the prisoner was suffering from general paresis, that he not only showed the physical signs, but the mental characteristics, and, furthermore, analysis of the cerebrospinal fluid showed the presence of lymphocytes, of positive globulin, and positive Wassermann reaction.

There never was any question, nor is there, that Dr. Cotton's standing is of the highest, and it is well recognized among the psychiatrists of the day that both by training and experience he is a man whose word is entitled to respectful credence.

There were those opposed who, while granting that some of the physical signs were present, were yet incapable of seeing, or unwilling to see, the mental features, and against the psychological and serological findings the objection was raised that a technical method, which is recognized the world over as representing the highest advance in scientific technique, was one that was not used. In the face of most unbiased evidence the prisoner was convicted and sent to jail, and now, within two or three months of the trial, we find that it is recognized, even by laymen, that he is suffering from general paresis and must be sent to the Trenton State Hospital.

This points a moral and adorns a tale. The older psychiatrists are able to diagnose a case of dementia praecox, of general paresis, of manic depressive insanity when the disease is so far advanced as to make it obvious to the man on the street that the patient is suffering from mental disease.

The facilities of modern psychiatry are such that the real psychiatrist should be able to make a diagnosis before the layman can. Refined methods of technic, advanced modes of examination, have come into the field and are bound to stay. We await with much interest the post-mortem report which undoubtedly Dr. Cotton will supply.

SMITH ELY JELLIFFE, New York.

Injury to the Hair and Its Forensic Significance.—Röttger (*Archiv für Kriminal-Anthropologie und Kriminalistik*, XLIV, 1911, 209-248) has set forth in this article the various changes which human hairs undergo as the result of age, disease and external injury.

Pathological Conditions, such as fungoid growth, cause both mechanical and chemical damage, as the splitting of the shaft, due to destruction of the cement substance, in trichoptilosis and fevers, with gradual decay from disturbed nutrition.

Normal Secretions, as sweat and urine, cause a loss of the cylindroid form of the shaft, the cortex is partly peeled off by the acids, the macerated shafts become brittle and present the characteristic brush-like appearance.

Heat effects changes in both structure and color. The intercellular air spaces in the cortex become disturbed, and vacuoles may appear in the medulla and the outline of the hair becomes styslike. Scorched areas, as from the flame from pistol shots, show fibres split off from the shaft.

Shooting off firearms at close range produces characteristic changes, not